

# Hume SEED Inclusive Employer Framework

---

## Acknowledgment of Country

Hume City Council recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage within the municipality and acknowledges the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung, which includes the Gunung-Willam-Balluk clan, as the Traditional Custodians of this land. Council embraces Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' living cultures as a vital part of Australia's identity and recognises, celebrates and pays respect to the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Elders past, present and future.



# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
What is Hume SEED?.....	4
Key Objectives of the Program .....	4
<b>Inclusive Employment .....</b>	<b>5</b>
What is Inclusive Employment? .....	5
What do we mean by Diversity and Inclusion?.....	6
Inclusive Employment for Hume SEED.....	6
<b>SEED – Supporting Inclusive Employment .....</b>	<b>7</b>
A Compelling Case for Workplace Diversity.....	7
Good News for Employees.....	8
<b>SEED Inclusive Employer Principles and Capabilities.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Working with Priority Groups.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Refugees and newly arrived migrants .....	12
Young People .....	14
Mature Age Workers.....	16
Targeted Aboriginal Employment .....	17
People Living with a Disability.....	20

# Introduction

## What is Hume SEED?

SEED connects leading Hume private and public industry partners to work together and create economic opportunities for local people and businesses in the region. Led by Hume City Council in partnership with ArcBlue consulting, this SEED program aims to inspire and support influential local organisations across a range of industries to create more social impact through their employment and procurement.

The program seeks to harness the power of private and public sector spend to create jobs in Hume City while working with businesses to untap talent through building inclusive employment capability. Working collectively to make small changes to the way business is done, significant positive impact can be made for the Hume community.

## Key Objectives of the Program

### Growing jobs for Hume residents



Maximising the impact of local procurement and job opportunities to create sustainable employment outcomes for priority jobseekers in the area.

### Embedding structural change



Developing tools, strategies and capability and embedding change in business processes to deliver ongoing social impact that will contribute to a more prosperous local community.

The Hume SEED Inclusive Employer Framework supports organisations in Hume to build their capability to be inclusive employers.

# Inclusive Employment

## What is Inclusive Employment?

'Inclusive Employment' can be defined as all efforts that promote fair and equitable access to decent employment, ensuring satisfactory pay and conditions, career prospects and opportunities for social integration (BSL 2015).

For SEED this means actively setting and meeting targets for employing disadvantaged jobseekers.



Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people are respected, connected, progressing *and* contributing to organisational success.

**Respected.** Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people at work feel valued and respected for who they are.

**Connected.** Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people feel connected to their co-workers and so have a sense of belonging.

**Progressing.** Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people at work have opportunities to develop their career and progress.

**Contributing.** Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people can contribute their talents and energies to the organisation.

Becoming an inclusive employer broadens the talent pool organisations have access to and is widely regarded as beneficial for businesses. Research by Deloitte research suggests that workplaces that are diverse and inclusive are twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets and eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes. Improved innovation, collaboration and responding to customer's changing needs are some of the top benefits reported from a more inclusive workforce. <sup>2</sup>

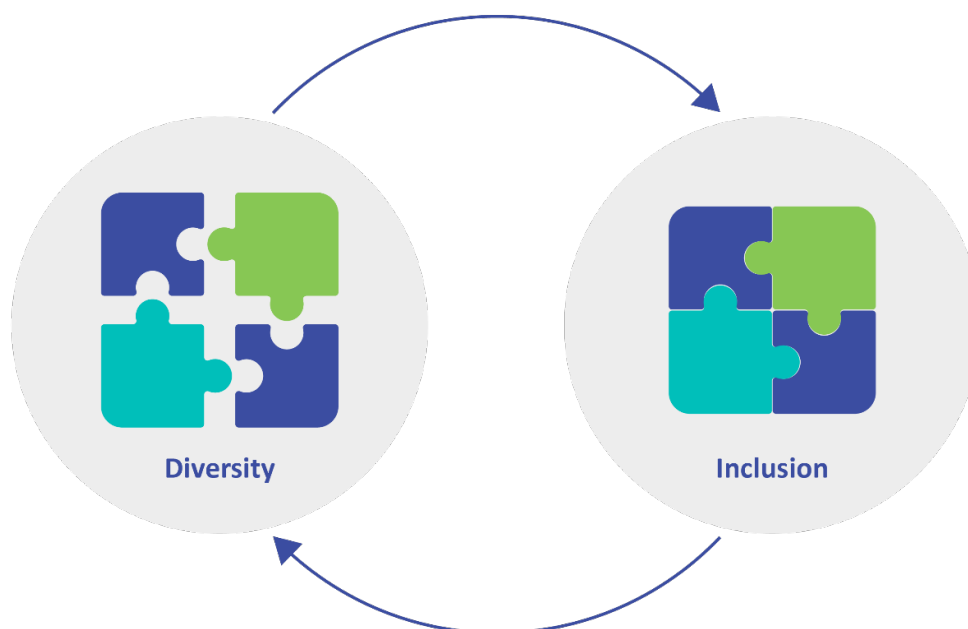
<sup>1</sup> [Diversity Council Australia \(O'Leary, J. And Legg, A.\) DCA-Suncorp Inclusion@Work Index 2017 – 2018: Mapping the State of Inclusion in the Australian Workforce, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia, 2017.](#)

<sup>2</sup> Deloitte 2017 Deloitte Access Economics 2017, [Diversity Dividend Report 2019](#), [The economic benefits of improving social inclusion](#)

## What do we mean by Diversity and Inclusion?

Diversity means enabling different type of people to participate. The focus is on composition of the workforce and diverse representation.

Inclusion is around making that mix work and valuing people contributions and perspectives.



## Inclusive Employment for Hume SEED

Hume City Council identified newly arrived migrants and refugees, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with a disability, mature aged people, young people, women and other disadvantaged jobseekers who have been long term unemployed as priority jobseekers for the SEED program to support.

SEED works closely with the well-established Local Jobs for Local People Program (LJLP) <sup>3</sup>to connect the identified priority Hume jobseekers with SEED organisations for employment and employment pathway opportunities. Hume's Local Jobs for Local People program is a pioneering place-based program that coordinates connections between local employers and local industry to create real local employment outcomes. Operating as a neutral broker with a detailed understanding of local skills and aspirations, LJLP is able to meet the needs of employers while finding employment for Hume residents.

SEED builds on LJLP and the considerable investment in the Commonwealth and Victorian jobs and participation programs, by working with employers to create culture change to become sustainably inclusive employers and strengthens the demand-led approach by gaining a deeper understanding of organisational goals and needs.

---

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.hume.vic.gov.au/Businesses/Local-Jobs-for-Local-People>

# SEED – Supporting Inclusive Employment

**SEED seeks to make a positive social impact by working with organisations to maximise opportunities for those who may otherwise have barriers to finding work.**

In Hume, the following target groups have been identified and are the focus of SEED activities:



## A Compelling Case for Workplace Diversity

According to The Diversity Council of Australia (DCA) 'Businesses that commit to and implement diversity policies are more likely to retain a committed and satisfied workforce (resulting in improved performance and profitability<sup>4</sup>.'

Many businesses in Australia have diversity compliance and reporting responsibilities as part of their requirements to anti-discrimination legislation. But having an effective diversity and inclusion strategy and policy is not just about compliance.

**For instance, a Deloitte (2017) study found that more diverse and inclusive workplaces saw on average:**

- **An 83% improvement on their ability to innovate**
- **A 3% improvement in the ability to respond to changing customer needs**
- **A 42% improvement in team collaboration**

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.dca.org.au/di-planning/getting-started-di/di-policy-development>

The study also found that inclusive workplaces provide a range of benefits, including:

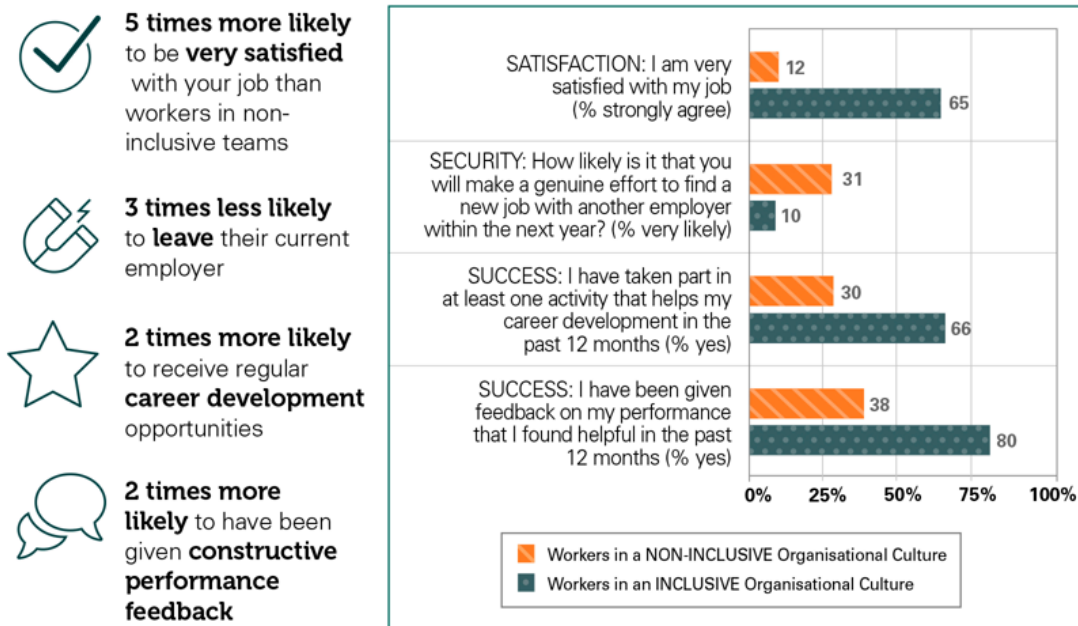
- **Improved conflict resolution and problem-solving skills**
- **Increased empathy and understanding of customer needs**
- **A larger, more diverse talent pool from which to recruit**
- **A more attractive proposition for potential candidates from more diverse backgrounds**

In 2019 the DCA Inclusion Index benchmarking survey was undertaken<sup>5</sup>.

The results showed that **three out of four Australian workers supported or strongly supported** their organisation taking action to create a workplace which is diverse and inclusive (D&I) and only 3% of Australian workers opposed or strongly opposed their organisation taking action.

## Good News for Employees

The results also showed that if you work in an inclusive organisation you are:

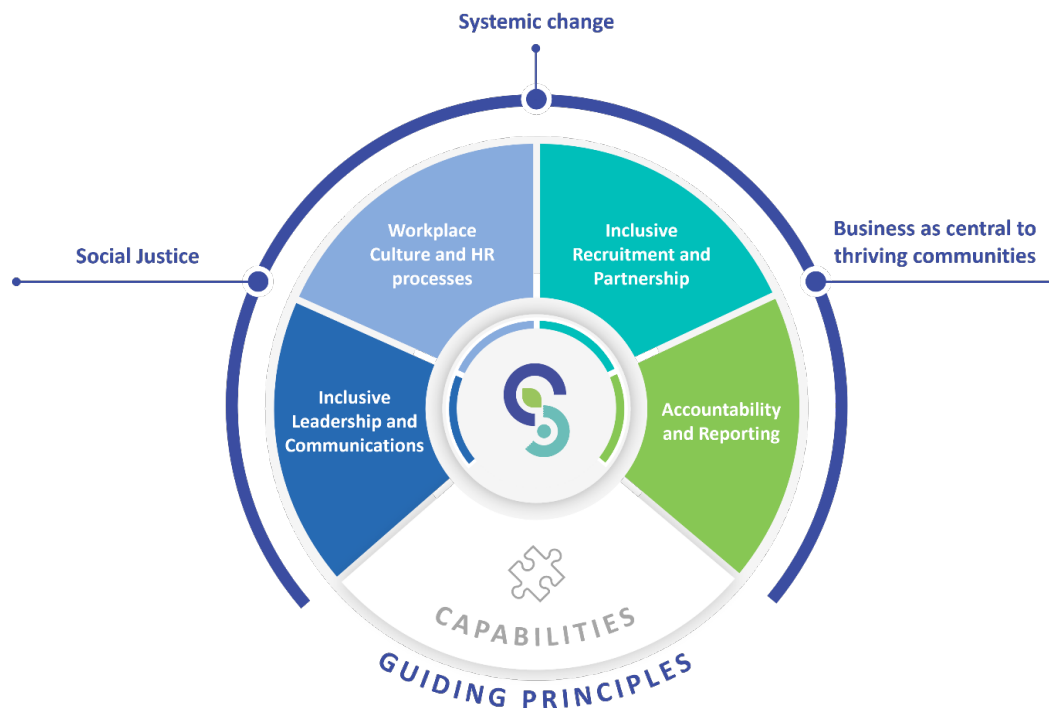


<sup>5</sup> <https://www.dca.org.au/inclusion-at-work-index/why-inclusion-matters>



# SEED Inclusive Employer Principles and Capabilities

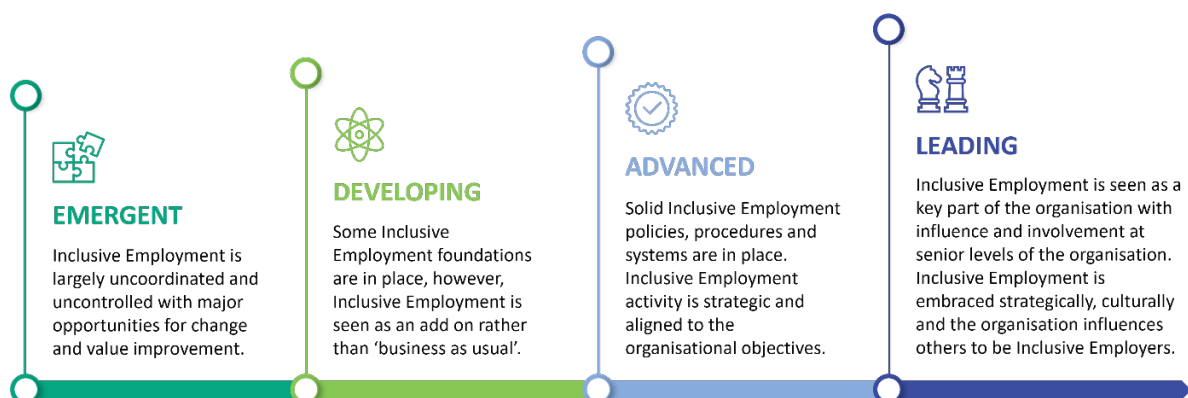
The Hume SEED program works with organisations to support them to become more inclusive employers using the following guiding principles and capabilities.



## Inclusive Employer Maturity

Using the guiding principles and capabilities, Hume SEED benchmarks employers Inclusive Employer maturity and works with them to create achievable action plans to build their capability.

### Inclusive Employer Maturity



## Key Focus Areas for Change

The table below outlines the key focus areas within each capability, the potential challenges that are typically faced, examples of good practice and a selection of actions that can be taken to address challenges and build capability.

Capability	Focus Area	Potential Challenges	What good looks like	Example Actions
Inclusive Leadership and Communications	Executive Support	Not strategically important to the organisation.	The executives understand and support Inclusive Employment as a strategic objective for the organisation and provide enough resources.  <b>Leading Practice: Influencing external organisations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build a Business Case</li> <li>Create an Inclusive Employment Strategy and Communications Plan</li> <li>Build and share case studies</li> </ul>
	Leadership resources	No clear responsibility at a senior level.	The Inclusive Employment lead is empowered and responsible for the coordination of all Inclusive Employment activities.  <b>Leading Practice: embedded in all managers' responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start an inclusive employment working group</li> <li>Identify Lead with responsibilities</li> <li>Build inclusive employment management group/guide</li> </ul>
Recruitment and Partnership	Recruitment policies, processes and practice	Limited or out-of-date inclusive recruitment policies, processes.	Up-to-date policies, accessible job ads, inclusive recruitment processes that are regularly reviewed.  <b>Leading practice: BAU across all recruitment and roles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review policies and processes</li> <li>Advertise on LJLP and other networks</li> <li>Design inclusive internal pathways</li> <li>Consider creating ambitious targets</li> </ul>
	Partnerships	Little or no engagement with local support services for priority job seekers.	Partnerships have been formed with support services that continue to build capacity of organisation as well as ongoing support to placed employees to ensure sustainability of employment.  <b>Leading practice: Strategic demand-led approach where partners work together on workforce planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and develop relationships with support service partners</li> <li>Work with partners to support IE capability</li> </ul>
	Work Exposure	Limited work exposure opportunities targeted at	A program is in place where opportunities for inclusive work exposure are discussed, developed and implemented.	<b>Deliver:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employer-led sessions</li> <li>Job tours</li> </ul>

		priority jobseekers.	<b>Leading Practice: The program is rolled out throughout organisation and into all areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Targeted apprenticeships / traineeships</li> </ul>
HR Systems and Workplace Culture	<b>Removing barriers</b>	No formal steps been taken to assess and remove barriers.	<p>Barriers have been removed and relevant inclusive Employment training has been provided to all staff with management responsibilities.</p> <p><b>Leading Practice: Regular reviews through formal processes and internal feedback</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-assess barriers for 1-2 priority groups</li> <li>Set up voluntary Employee Resource groups*</li> <li>Seek professional support such as inclusion training and workplace adjustments</li> </ul>
	<b>Staff engagement</b>	No staff engagement in inclusion.	<p>Leadership and HR are committed to Inclusive Employment and are actively championing inclusion and offering a program of opportunities for staff to engage throughout the organisation.</p> <p><b>Leading Practice: Inclusion is actively celebrated as part of company culture</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peer mentoring or buddy system</li> <li>Celebrate cultural and identity days</li> <li>Embed inclusion training for all staff regularly</li> </ul>
Accountability	<b>Reporting</b>	Reporting does not capture DEI data.	<p>A process has been developed to identify, monitor and report the organisations performance against agreed key Inclusive Employment KPI's, commitments and achievements.</p> <p><b>Leading Practice: Lessons are captured from unsuccessful placements and shared transparently</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create anonymous survey to get baseline diversity and inclusion data.</li> <li>Develop a reporting framework</li> <li>Consider an impact evaluation.</li> </ul>

# Working with Priority Groups

## Refugees and newly arrived migrants

### Discrimination

Employers should read the Legal Provisions and General Recruitment Guidance in this Toolkit for more details.

The concept of special measures is generally understood to apply to positive measures (affirmative action) taken to redress historical disadvantage and confer benefits on a particular group, so that they may enjoy their rights equally with other groups; special measures are designed to ensure the equality of outcomes for disadvantaged groups.

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/guidelines-understanding-special-measures-racial-discrimination-act-1975-cth-2011>

### Guidance for Employers on Employing Refugees

New Arrivals New Connections — An employer's guide to working with migrants and refugees from the Department of Home Affairs:

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settlement-services-subsite/files/english-ausco-easy-read-new-connections.pdf>

### Deakin University - Centre for Refugee Employment

Deakin University researchers have launched a first-of-its-kind guide to help Australian employers hire refugees and asylum seekers.

The guide's release coincides with the unveiling of Deakin's new Centre for Refugee Employment, Advocacy, Training and Education ([CREATE](#)), based within the Faculty of Business and Law.

The [10-page guide](#) helps simplify the process for employers who may be unsure of the different visas and work rights held by those with a refugee or asylum seeker background.

It's based on the findings of a study conducted by researchers from the new centre, in conjunction with Monash University and Australia National University, which examined why some organisations actively employ people from a refugee background and others do not.

To view the guide click:

[http://deakincreate.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/sites/96/2019/02/DEA\\_GuideforEmployers\\_RefugeesAsylumSeekers\\_AMEND01.WEB\\_.pdf](http://deakincreate.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/sites/96/2019/02/DEA_GuideforEmployers_RefugeesAsylumSeekers_AMEND01.WEB_.pdf)

For more information on CREATE visit <http://deakincreate.org.au/>.

## Organisational Benefits

Refugees and newly arrived migrants:

- understand Australia's multicultural consumers
- provide better customer service by using their language and cultural skills
- provide access to new market segments and networks
- expand internationally to overseas markets.

## Recruiting refugees and newly arrived migrants

- Understand who your existing customers are. Can you serve them better with different skill sets? Does your workplace reflect your customer base?
- Research potential new markets. Who are your products or services suited to? Could a more diverse workplace help you reach those new markets?
- Plan the future of your business. Where might you export your products or services? Are you considering importing? What language skills would help you do this more easily?

## Working with CALD Employees

- Develop workplace policies and training that promote cross-cultural awareness
- Hold lunches and events that celebrate workplace diversity and encourage employees to share their cultures and experiences
- Set up mentoring arrangements that match employees from different backgrounds, to encourage open communication
- Find out when significant cultural and religious events and days are on, so you can anticipate leave requests and plan celebrations in the workplace.



# Young People

## Quick Facts

- Nearly one in five unemployed 15 to 24 year old's today have been out of work for 52 weeks or more.
- The youth unemployment rate in October 2019, at 12.0%, was three times as high as the 3.9% unemployment rate for those aged 25 and over.
- Despite Australia being about to notch up 30 years of overall economic growth, an estimated 265,000 young people today are in the unemployment queue.

Source: Prosperity's Children, Youth Unemployment in Australia, *Brotherhood of St Laurence*, December 2019

## Attracting Your Future Workforce

Employers have many opportunities to support young people to gain meaningful employment; whilst attracting their future workforce.

Attracting next generation employees to industries and workplaces as early as primary and high school and offering work experience and work tour opportunities helps expose young people to different industries and workplaces available to them within the Hume region.

Attracting our young people to job types and industries early in their schooling also enables them to make appropriate decisions regarding subject choices and study pathways (vocational or tertiary).

So how can you get involved to support our young people?

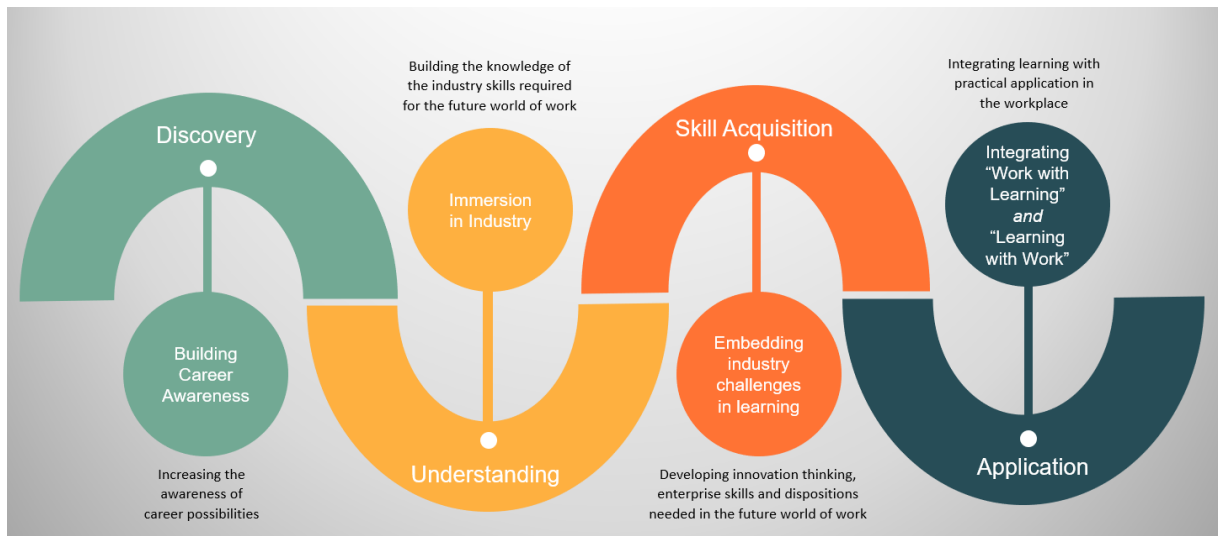
## Opportunities for SEED Employers

There are four important stages of engagement to support young people into employment pathways:

1. **DISCOVERY:** Building awareness – *providing opportunities to increase awareness of career possibilities*
2. **UNDERSTANDING:** Immersion in industry – *Building the knowledge of the industry skills required for the future world of work*
3. **SKILL ACQUISITION:** Embedding real world challenges in learning – *Developing innovation thinking, enterprise skills and dispositions needed in the future world of work; and*
4. **APPLICATION:** Integrating work with learning – *integrating learning with practical application in the workplace.*

These four important stages are reflected in the following graphic:





## What can I do?

If you would like to build awareness of your industry, your workplace and the job roles available there, you could consider workplace tours or job conversations for young people?

If you want to help a young person apply their learning to practical workplace tasks then you could consider hosting work experience, work placements or internships.

Partnering with the range of services and organisations across Hume to help you identify young people to participate in these opportunities will assist you to develop meaningful, well attended activities. Contact the SEED team or the Local Jobs for Local People program at Hume City Council to identify organisations that you can work with.

# INDUSTRY AND EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

**HELP SHAPE THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE**

*Taking a vested interest in the education of potential future employees, industry can ensure their future workers have the skills they need.*

---

**Values and benefits for industry**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Inspire young people to consider career options with the industry</li> <li>✓ Inform young people about the breadth of careers available</li> <li>✓ Support high staff morale and commitment</li> <li>✓ Allow future employee to understand industry expectations</li> <li>✓ Provide public relation and community recognition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop employability skills of future workforce</li> <li>✓ Improve the prospects of the local economy</li> <li>✓ Create innovative approaches to learning</li> <li>✓ Improve industries skill base</li> <li>✓ Enhance industry reputation</li> <li>✓ Keep young people local</li> </ul>
---	---

# Mature Age Workers

## Quick Facts

- The percentage of Australians aged 65 and over in the labour force doubled between 2000 and 2015 – and 20% of people over 70 are still working.
- Age discrimination is a major barrier. A recent survey by the Human Rights Commission with the Australian Human Resources Institute identified that one in three organisations indicated that there is an age over which they are reluctant to recruit – most of them nominated age 50 as “too old”.
- ABS data confirms that older workers take up to twice as long to find work compared with younger cohorts.

## Organisational Benefits

Age Discrimination Commissioner, Dr Patterson, states that “we need the strengths and different skills brought by all generations in the workplace if Australia is to meet the challenges of a changing workplace.” Dr Patterson also states that:

- There are demonstrable benefits in fostering multigenerational workplaces
- Employers who create multigenerational teams can access enhanced productivity and creativity.

## Recommendations for Employers

The Report from the *Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination Against Older Australians and Australians with Disability (2016)*, identified a series of recommendations for employers in order to increase the recruitment and retention of older people.

These recommendations are categorised as:

1. Leadership commitment
2. Ensuring non-discriminatory recruitment and retention practices
3. Building workplace flexibility
4. Facilitating transitions
5. Provide targeted education and training in the workplace

For details of each category see the following webpage: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/publications/willing-work-good-practice-examples-employers-2016>

## More Guidance

For more information and guidance on how to encourage and support older Australians in the workforce read the following key report.

<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/age-discrimination/projects/willing-work-national-inquiry-employment-discrimination>



## Targeted Aboriginal Employment

**Despite efforts to ‘close the gap’ in Indigenous disadvantage, the disparity between employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous Australians has increased in recent years.**

According to the most recent Closing the Gap report less than half of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are employed, compared to over three quarters of non-Indigenous Australians<sup>6</sup>.

Increasingly, employers are seeking to create employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through targeted recruitment strategies.

### What is Targeted Recruitment?

‘Targeted recruitment strategies’ for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may include:

- Reserving certain positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants
- Guaranteed interview schemes
- Work placements, traineeships or mentoring programs
- Engaging an Indigenous Recruitment Service to hire trainees, graduates and fill other roles

### Isn’t Targeted Recruitment Discriminatory?

Some employers are concerned that implementing such targeted recruitment strategies may breach discrimination laws.

**However, discrimination laws recognise that some groups, including racial groups, have suffered historical disadvantage and do not enjoy their human rights equally with others.**

These laws permit employers to adopt ‘special measures’ to assist disadvantaged racial groups so that they can have similar access to opportunities as others in the community.

For more information on targeted recruitment and special measures view the Summary Guide to Targeted Recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people here:

[https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/AHRC\\_Targeted\\_recruitment\\_ATSI\\_people\\_summary2015.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/AHRC_Targeted_recruitment_ATSI_people_summary2015.pdf)

### Employer Guide - Targeted Recruitment of Aboriginal People

This guideline will help employers to use the ‘special measure’ provisions in the federal *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)* and state and territory discrimination laws, to target Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for recruitment.

The Human Rights Commission believes this is an important resource for employers seeking to advance the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

<https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/targeted-recruitment>

---

<sup>6</sup> Extracted from:

[https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/AHRC\\_Targeted\\_recruitment\\_ATSI\\_people\\_summary2015.pdf](https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/AHRC_Targeted_recruitment_ATSI_people_summary2015.pdf)

## Everybody's Business – A Handbook for Indigenous Employment

This step-by-step instruction manual is packed with practical advice for managers and supervisors who are on the frontline of hiring and retaining staff. Many employers have shared their stories about making reconciliation a reality at work. The content has been tested with prospective employers and Indigenous staff in many industries and reflects their valuable input.

This handbook was created in close consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and organisations and is a result of collaboration between GenerationOne, the Australian Employment Covenant, Reconciliation Australia and Social Ventures Australia.

Page 18 onwards provides detailed practical information around attracting and recruiting Indigenous employees.

Access the handbook here:

<https://www.socialventures.com.au/assets/A-Handbook-for-Indigenous-Employment.pdf>

## Screening and Interview Tips

(Extracted from: <https://www.socialventures.com.au/assets/A-Handbook-for-Indigenous-Employment.pdf>)

- Be flexible in the screening and interviewing process but try to use the same tools and techniques for all applicants so you can compare people and select on merit.
- The best person for the job may not perform well in a standard interview, so think about how to get the most from the process. If the applicant looks uncomfortable, change your interviewing approach to help the applicant relax. For example, instead of asking question after question, pause and spend time talking about the business and the workplace, or ask the applicant more general questions about the important people in his/her life.
- Try to conduct the interview in a place where people can relax, possibly even outdoors. You may meet the candidate informally before the interview, outside the office, to build the relationship.

Some employers have adapted screening and interviewing techniques by:

- Helping applicants prepare for the interview with a phone call from the Indigenous Employment Manager or a person on the selection panel
- Rewording questions using an informal, chatty style
- Allowing family or other community members to attend the interview
- Holding group interviews, where candidates participate in an activity or group questions

Panel members should be sensitive to the fact that some Indigenous people find it difficult to back themselves because their culture places greater importance on the group rather than the individual. As a result, applicants may use “us” or “we” instead of “I” or “me”.

For more detailed information on successful recruitment and retention please refer to the handbook in its entirety here: <https://www.socialventures.com.au/assets/A-Handbook-for-Indigenous-Employment.pdf>

## National Closing the Gap Targets

2019 Closing the Gap Report - <https://ctgreport.niaa.gov.au/>

Read more on Employment and Economic Development targets, activities and progress for Indigenous Australians as part of the Australia Governments Closing the Gap commitment.

### Employment:

Having a job can be transformational. It creates financial independence and fosters new and improved skills. It also acts as a gateway to other opportunities.

Employment is critical to the health and prosperity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It offers social and economic benefits that flow to individuals, families, communities and the economy as a whole.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are thriving in workplaces across Australia, however progress towards the target to halve the gap in employment rates has been slow. It is important to understand the drivers and barriers affecting Indigenous employment when considering the pace of change required.

Read the full chapter here: <https://ctgreport.niaa.gov.au/employment.html>

### Economic Development:

Economic development includes skills development, business development and employment. It paves the way for improving social and economic participation and is in turn linked to better health and education outcomes. For this reason, the Australian Government has made economic development a central tenet of its approach to Indigenous Affairs.

Read the full chapter here: <https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/reports/closing-the-gap-2017/economic-development.html>

**Disclaimer:** *The information provided in this information sheet is only intended as a guide. It is not a substitute for legal advice.*

## People Living with a Disability

Like everyone, people living with a disability want a high quality of life. To achieve this, they seek access to, and pursue outcomes across, all areas of life, such as education, employment, health care, housing, and justice.

People with disability have diverse perspectives, experiences, skills and talents. Evidence demonstrates that people with disability have a positive work attitude and work ethos, and that hiring people with disability can boost productivity and morale in the workplace.

*Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Employ Outside the Box: The Business Case for Employing People with Disability (2014)*

### Quick Facts

- Around one in five people in Australia have some form of disability. (1)
- 48% of people (15-64) with disability are employed, compared with 80% without disability. (2)
- The unemployment rate for people with autism spectrum disorders was 34.1%, more than three times the rate for people with disability (10.3%) (3)
- Decreasing the gap in labour participation rates between people with and without disabilities by one third could result in an increase in GDP of \$43 billion over a decade. (4)

### What is disability? (WHAT)

Disability refers to a broad range of impairments, limitations, or restrictions that may be physical, intellectual, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, or a combination of these. It includes conditions that are present at birth, acquired later in life, or may develop over time. Disabilities can be visible or invisible, permanent, or temporary, and they may impact a person's mobility, sensory perception, communication, cognitive abilities, or mental health. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines disability as:

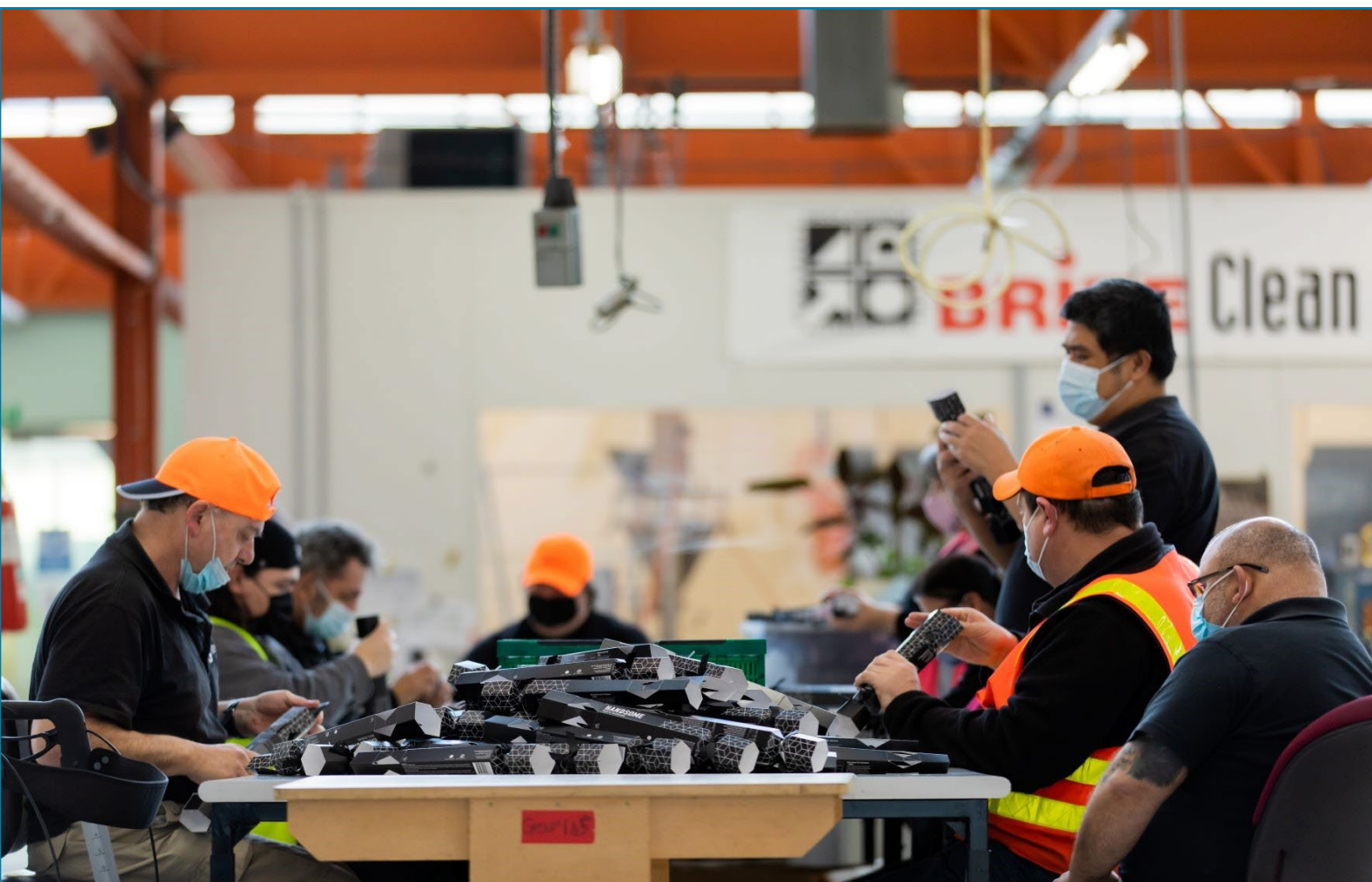
1. **Physical disability:** This includes impairments that affect a person's mobility, dexterity, coordination, or physical functioning. It may involve conditions such as paralysis, amputation, muscular dystrophy, or chronic pain.
2. **Intellectual disability:** This refers to limitations in intellectual functioning and adaptive behaviour. It includes conditions like Down syndrome, intellectual developmental disorders, and cognitive impairments.
3. **Sensory disability:** It encompasses impairments related to the senses, such as vision impairment (blindness, low vision), hearing impairment (deafness, hearing loss), or other sensory processing disorders.
4. **Psychosocial disability:** This category includes disabilities related to mental health conditions. It covers conditions like depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and other psychiatric conditions.
5. **Neurological disability:** It encompasses impairments of the nervous system, such as multiple sclerosis, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, acquired brain injury, or neurodevelopmental disorders like autism spectrum disorder.

## Disability discrimination

Disability discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably, or not given the same opportunities, as others in a similar situation because of their disability.

The DD) makes it unlawful to discriminate against people with disabilities in employment, including:

- the recruitment process, such as advertising, interviewing, and other selection processes.
- decisions on who will get the job.
- terms and conditions of employment, such as pay rates, work hours and leave.
- promotion, transfer, training, or other benefits associated with employment.
- dismissal or any other detriment, such as demotion or retrenchment.



## Organisational Benefits (WHY)

Like everyone, people with disability want a high quality of life yet they are more likely to face challenges in all aspects of life than people without disability. By employing someone with disability, not only are you having a significant impact on an individual, there are also numerous organisational benefits including:

- Diverse and inclusive workforce
- Access to untapped talent pool
- Increased employee morale and loyalty
- Enhanced reputation and brand image
- Compliance with legal requirement
- Access to government incentives and support
- Improved customer relations
- Reduced staff turnover, reducing recruitment and training costs

## **Becoming an accessible employer (HOW)**

When employing people with disabilities, it's crucial to provide appropriate accommodations, support, and an inclusive work environment to ensure their success, well-being, and full participation in all aspects of life.

### **Recruitment**

Consider all aspects of the recruitment process from how you design and advertise your job, the interview and selection process to induction and training. Be sure to use inclusive language and prepare the right questions.

Equal opportunity ensures fairness for all. It recognizes that different groups may require different approaches to overcome discrimination, as equality doesn't always mean treating everyone the same. The law acknowledges that disadvantaged groups may need special assistance to ensure they have equal opportunities. Special measures are intended as a balancing mechanism; designed to help equality but not to unfairly advance one group over another once the playing field is even.

You'll also need to ensure your workplace is ready, that you have best practice policies and procedures in place, that staff receive disability and awareness training, and any necessary workplace adjustments are in place.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

In most cases the person with a disability will be able to tell the employer what reasonable adjustments are needed. If necessary, employers should also seek advice from government agencies or organisations which represent or provide services to people with disabilities. Examples of adjustments that may be reasonable for an employer to make include:

- Changing recruitment and selection procedures.
- Modifying work premises.
- Changes to job design, work schedules or other work practices.
- Modifying equipment.
- Providing training or other assistance.



## Useful links

[Overview - Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[Overview - Australian Government Job Access; Driving disability employment](#)

[Special measures - Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission](#)

[Developing an effective DDA Action Plan - Australian Human Rights Commission](#)

[Disability Confident Recruiter - Australian Network on Disability](#)

[Access and Inclusion Index - Australian Network on Disability](#) – a tool to help organisations measure its access and inclusion journey.

## Incentives / funding

- [Disability WORKS Australia Ltd Employer Incentives \(dwa.org.au\)](#)
- Programs
  - Stepping into
  - PACE mentoring



☎ +61 3 9205 2858

✉ [joblink@hume.vic.gov.au](mailto:joblink@hume.vic.gov.au)

🌐 [Social procurement, Employment and  
Economic Development \(SEED\)](#)

Led by:



In partnership with:

